1: Cunningham G-3 (1846-47) 1854 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4

I.—INTRODUCTION.

1. The earliest authentic notices of Ladák scarcely reach so far back as the beginning of the Christian era. In A.D. 399-400, when the Chinese pilgrims, Fa-Hian,* Hoeï-King, and others, reached *Yu-thian* (or Kotan), the former determined to remain behind for some time to witness the procession of images, while Hoeï-King proceeded in advance to *Kie-chha*. After the procession had taken place, Fa-Hian travelled by *Tsu-ho* and *Yu-hoeï*, and over the *Tsung-Ling* mountains southward to *Kie-chha*, where he rejoined Hoeï-King. On those mountains, which were one month's journey in breadth, the snow, it is said, never melted, and the natives of the country were known by the name of "men of the snowy mountains." From *Kie-chha* the pilgrims proceeded westward to *Tho-ly*, which they reached in one month. From this account, it appears to me that there can be no doubt of the identity of the ancient *Kie-chha* with the modern Ladák.

2. To reach Ladák from Kotan there were two roads open to the pilgrims, the western by Kukeyar and the southern by Ruthog (or Rudok). By either route the

* See the *Fo-kue-ki*, by Messrs. Remusat, Klaproth, and Landresse, or the Translation by Laidlay.

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1: Cunningham G-3 (1846-47) 1854 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4

travellers would have to cross the Kárákoram mountains; but as *Tsu-ho* is stated to have been only 1,000 li (about 166 miles) from *Su-le* (or Kashgar), it is clear that Fa-Hian must have followed the western route. This is more distinctly proved by the Chinese identification of *Tsu-ho* with *Chu-kiu-pho*, which was exactly 1,000 li to the westward of Kotan. *Tsu-ho* was therefore midway between Kotan and Kashgar. Klaproth identified it with Kukeyar, and he is probably correct. From *Tsu-ho* the pilgrims proceeded to the south, and over the *Tsung-Ling*, or "Onion Mountains." From Kukeyar to Ladák the road lies to the south over the Kárákoram mountains, which, even as high as 17,000 feet, are covered with wild leeks, thus justifying the Chinese name of Tsung-Ling, or "Onion Mountains."* To the westward of *Kie-chha*, at one month's journey, was *Tho-ly*, or (as it is written by Hwan-Thsang) *Tha-li-lo*, which is an exact transcript of Darel, one of the Dardu districts on the Indus; and which Hwan-Thsang places to the westward of *Po-lu-lo* or Bolor, that is, the modern district of Balti. As Darel is just one month's journey from Lé, the district of Ladák corresponds exactly in geographical position with the ancient kingdom of *Kie-chha*.

3. But the other details, recorded by Fa-Hian, seem to place this identification beyond all doubt. The country was "mountainous, and so cold that no grain but corn ever ripened," which is exactly the case with Ladák. *Kie-chha*, moreover, possessed a stone vase of the same colour as Buddha's alms-dish, besides a tooth of Buddha.

* I owe this fact to Dr. Thomas Thomson, my brother Commissioner on the Tibetan frontier, whose spirit of enterprise carried him to the top of the Kárákoram pass.

1: Cunningham G-3 (1846-47) 1854 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4

Rongdo on the south, and Ruthog, Nubra, Shigar, and Hunza-Nager on the north.

This range has been often crossed by Europeans, but always on the same high roads, which generally lead over the lowest and easiest passes. We have the heights of six of these passes in different parts of the range.

	Passes.	Feet.	Authority.
1	Tsaka-la	15,000	Trebeck.
2	Kongta-la	15,495	Moorcroft, MS.
3	Chang-la	18,105	Ditto do.
4	Lazgung or Sabu-lá ...	17,666	Dr. Thomson.
5	Lé Pass	17,600	Ditto.
6	Hanu Pass	16,890	Col. Bates.
	Mean height	16,792 or 16,800 feet.	

As the average height of these passes approaches 17,000 feet, the general elevation of the range may be estimated at not less than 20,000 feet. The height of the celebrated Kailás peak has been determined by Lieut. R. Strachey at 20,700 feet. A peak which I measured on one of the spurs of the range to the north of Mahé was 18,500 feet. In this part, as we may see from the heights of the Kongta-la and Tsakala Passes, the range is much depressed, but in the neighbourhood of Lé, wherever I could see the ridge, it was entirely covered with snow in the beginning of October. As the lofty passes to the northward of Lé are said to be always clear of snow at the end of summer, the snow-line on the Kailás or Mid-Tibetan range may be estimated at 19,000 feet,* or more, on the southern face;

* In the Journal As. Soc. Bengal, vol. xviii. p. 302, Lieut. R. Strachey estimates the snow-line on the southern face of Kailás at not less than 19,500 feet, which agrees with my observations. See Plate I.

231 unruly horses had to be tied and shoed while they lay on the ground. All this was carried out with great skill and adroitness by the men.

437 492 Now the people drove together about 200 sheep and goats from their stables; these were to take part in the trip, serving as beasts of burden. Each animal was made to carry in a double sack a load of from 14 to 15 kilograms of wheat, dried apricots, or a corresponding quantity of other wares; aside from this each animal literally carried its own fleece to the market. The mountain sheep and goats are sturdy and extremely adroit climbers. However, there are many that succumb to the exertions of the long journey or that are torn to bits by the wolves or snow leopards.

• 487 437 In three days the expedition arrived a Leh, moving in easy daily marches, in order to spare men and animals, and generally following the course of the Indus River. Most of the nine men went on foot, Drogpa Namgyal and two of the men each had a horse to ride on besides the horses they used for carrying burdens. It was the duty of the men on foot to drive on the pack horses and to lead them on the narrow, poor /156/ bridle paths, as well as to lead and keep together the herd of sheep and goats carrying the loads. In Leh, at the bazaar, they purchased some provisions and exchange wares, for the last time. Then they proceeded further along the Indus, through barren valleys, narrow gulleys, sandy, stony deserts, over high mountain passes, through torrential mountain streams, now in the scorching glare of the sun, now in icy cold, yes, even in bitter snow storms. In this way they finally arrived at the great plateau of Jangtang in the eastern part of Ladakh, after about one month's journey during which they engaged in trade along the way wherever an opportunity presented itself. The Jangtang upland plateau is situated in the territory of Greater Tibet, in the area under the jurisdiction of the Dalai Lama. Having arrived there the people from Ladakh visited a series of widely [233] scattered nomads' camps. These nomads live year in and year out in their brown tents (re-po) woven from yak's hair, and they guard and tend their flocks of animals, sheep, a large, high-legged species, goats, horses, donkeys, and yaks. They move from one pasturing place to the next, depending simply on where there happens to be enough pasture and water. Big and strong and long-haired dogs (Tibetan mastiffs) help the nomads to keep their flocks of animals together and to protect them against wild animals. Their entire wealth consists of their herds, the rock salt which they break out of the numerous old lake beds, and of the natron which is found up there on the upland plateaus.

6: Gazetteer G-5 (ca. 1840-1883) 1883-4 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4

312 423 425 651 421 681 487

Chapter, III, D. Village Communities and Tenures.

Begár or forced labour demandable from landholders in Láhaul.

general opinion is that no outsider can get a share of the water of a canal, except from the body of old shareholders. The State in a *Khálsa kothí*, or the Thákur in a *jágír kothí* could not give a share; practically, therefore, their power of approvement of the waste is limited unless a new canal can be made.

Mr. Barnes describes the system of forced labour or *begár* prevailing everywhere in the hills, and mentions that it is one of the conditions of the tenure by which all proprietors hold land of the State in the hills. The forced labour which falls upon the Láhaulís is peculiarly heavy, as their country is a highway used by many travellers and officials on tour, and is surrounded by high snowy mountains and large tracts of elevated waste. The demand all occurs within the six months of summer, the time within which all field-work and all trading journeys have to be done. It is distributed equally on each *jeola* or holding, but at times it may be ruinous to certain families to have to give perhaps their only man; or there may be none at home, all being away engaged in the carrying trade between Tibet and Kúlu, in which almost all Láhauli landholders are concerned. The arrangements which have grown up owing to these difficulties, and which have now become fixed institutions, deserve to be briefly described. For the periodical repairs of roads a man is demanded from every house; for the carriage of travellers' baggage a man is taken from every *jeola*, or full allotment of land only, and the demand for supplies of all kinds required for travellers is distributed in the same way. Each *kothá* or group of *kothís* repairs certain lengths of highway, and carries baggage, and furnishes supplies for the stage nearest to it to travellers merely moving about the valley. The four *kothís* of Rangloi unite to undertake the carriage from Láhaul over the Rhotang Pass into Kúlu. There remains the most difficult task of all, that is, the providing supplies and carriage to travellers wishing to leave Láhaul for Ladákh, Spiti, Zánskár or Chamba by the Bará Lachá, Shinkúl or Kukti Passes, which are all over 16,000 feet in height, and involve a camping out for several nights in the wastes. For the work of these passes the ten *kothís* of Gára and Pattan have put themselves on a common roll or roster. Each *kothí* keeps an account with the other *kothís* of its contributions, and within each *kothí* each holding keeps an account with the other holdings. If a holding cannot furnish its man in its turn, a substitute is sent, and there are fixed sums which the defaulting holding is obliged to pay to the substitute (in addition to the pay which he gets from the travellers), as follows:—

Name of route.	Sum payable to the substitute.
To Rupshú, over the Bára Lácha	Three rupees cash, 70lbs barley meal, 1 pair boots, butter 2lbs.
To Spiti, over the Bára Lácha ...	Rupees 2 cash, 36lbs barley meal, 1 pair boots, butter 2lbs.
To Zánskár, over the Shinkúl ...	Rupees 2 cash, 32lbs barley meal, 1 pair boots, 2lbs butter.
To Chambá, over the Kukti ...	Rupees 2 cash, 32lbs barley meal, 3 pairs plaited straw sandals.

6: Gazetteer G-5 (ca. 1840-1883) 1883-4 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4

Chapter III, D.

Village Communities and Tenures.

Begár or forced labour demandable from landholders in Láhaul.

The demand by travellers for pack horses over the Bára Lácha and Shinkál is in the same way borne rateably by the ten *kothís*, and within the *kothís* by the different holdings. The defaulting *kothí* or landowner pays the owner of the substitute pony a considerable sum in cash at rates fixed for the different journeys.* Defalcations are numerous and the accounts therefore perplexing. It is the custom, therefore, for each *kothí* to appoint by vote an elder to represent the *kothí* in the committee of *begár* accounts. He is called the *siyáné* and gets Rs. 6 cash per annum from the common account, and is himself excused all *begár*. To collect and store supplies in readiness for travellers, and to keep the account of the store, two men are selected year by year in each *kothí* under the name of *talabdár*. They get no pay, but are excused their turn of the *begár* while in office. The above regulations apply to the regular landholders; they appear to have been made by the people themselves under general pressure put upon them by the authorities. In Pattan there are some Dágí families who hold *chetís* or small allotments of land rent-free from the State, on condition of stacking wood at certain halting places.

Sub-divisions in Spiti, and nature of town-ship and villages.

There are five *kothís* in Spiti—Todpá, Barjik, Shám, Churí and Pín; the four first are in the main valley, the fifth includes the whole valley of the Pín river, and is shut off from the rest of Spiti by high mountains, except where the river forces its way through a deep narrow gorge to join the main stream. The name Todpá means head of the valley, Barjik the centre, and Shám the lower end, and these *kothís* divide the main valley between them accordingly. The name Churí implies endowment or assignment to religious uses, and the *kothí* consists of the villages scattered here and there over the whole length of valley. Again, in a few cases, different holdings in the same village belong to different *kothís*. It is hardly necessary to add that there are no boundaries between *kothis* in the waste, except perhaps in the case of Pín. A kind of boundary will be found to exist between villages which are not separated by any large expanse of waste; that is, such villages have loosely recognized limits within which both exercise separately the right of grazing cattle or cutting grass and wood; but even where such limits are clearest, they do not imply a full property of the soil. The right of the State to grant new holdings in such waste, if it could give water by making a new canal, would not be disputed; and where the villages, as is often the case, are far apart, there are no boundaries between them of any kind.

Form of holding of fields and nature of tenure of waste and arable lands.

The form of tenure of the fields attached to the villages is the same as in Láhaul. Each field belongs to a separate estate or house, and with other fields forms its allotment supposed to have been originally conferred by the States and to be now independently held of it.† Owing to the custom of primogeniture which prevails these allotments are never sub-divided. The water available for irrigation

* Of the ten *kothis* two have no ponies, being on the south side of the Chandra, so they of course default each time.

† *Zing kom* is a local word used to describe such an allotment. A *zing kom chenpá* or full allotment, varies from three to seven acres in extent according to quality of the soil. Some few families only hold a half allotment or *zing khom fitha*.

[For descriptions of the routes used by Justice Douglas, see category 133. --Analyst]

13: Heber and Heber

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[For descriptions of topography and routes on the authors' trip to Ladak, see category 116, Chapter VII, pp. 75-85--Analyst]

000 it was there that we stopped for lunch. In this grove camel caravans were repacking for the trek downstream to Khargil. Farmers were gathered under the trees, gleaning news from the men of the caravans. Mule trains, carrying produce between the villages up and down the Indus in the manner of our locals, rested
132 in the shade. It was cool in the shade but blistering in the sun. Though this stretch of the Indus lay over eleven thousand feet high, the daytime temperature marched well over 100 degrees; and on some days it went into the 130's. The summer heat is so great and so sustained that it brings grain to maturity in two months' time.

• 489 The trail, after crossing the Indus, divides, one fork going south along the river's edge to Spitok, Khalatse, and Khargil, the other turning north to Leh, the Khardong Pass (18,380 feet), and Yarkand, an ancient trading center of Sinkiang. We took the right fork
137 and in four miles came to Leh. This approach to Leh is dreary and desolate. In early summer there are buttercups, columbine (called asses' sugar), and clematis in this area. Later come the vetches, lavender, bluebells, and cornflowers. There are great stands of iris, which is sometimes stacked and dried for winter fodder. These flowers bring color to the land. But by mid-August the gaiety is gone. The flush of light green from the tender spring grass has also passed. Now the slopes and nullas are dry and sear.

134 Monotonous browns and grays fill every stretch with desolation. Each view shows the end product of erosion. The ground has been endlessly pounded by the quick feet of goats and sheep; the protective covering of the earth has been eaten off or washed away; there is no topsoil left; every ravine tells the story of harsh runoffs of water; the fields and slopes are strewn with countless rocks, pitched up by the slow working of frost or exposed by the cutting wind that whines ceaselessly along the Indus. There is no shade, no touch of life, no bush, no scattered hummocks of the *dama* bush. There are distant snow-capped peaks to lift the heart; but there are only heat and dust and rubble underfoot.

"Oh, the brothers often get filled up with *chan*[1] and shout at each other and argue, but they do not come to blows."

Buddha taught the principle of non-violence; and it so molded the character of the people that centuries later non-violence was a working standard even in the hurly-burly of a great caravan center such as Leh. I could find modern records of thefts but few other crimes.

Leh is on a historic caravan route that leads not only to Yarkand in Sinkiang but to Lhasa in Tibet. It thrived when commerce thrived; it had depressions when war or bandits or jealous politics diverted the stream of trade. Wool, silver, felts, tea, candy, skins, velvets, silk, gold, carpets, musk, coral, borax, jade cups, salt came down from the north. Cotton goods, shawls, brocades, opium, indigo, plumes, shoes, pearls, ginger, cloves, pepper, honey, tobacco, sugar cane, barley, rice, wheat, corn came up from the south. The large serai—about a half block square—where the caravans stopped at Leh still stands. The bazaars where the goods were sold or haggled over, the market place where men searched out new trade missions, the place where ponies were bought, sold, or rented—these are still there. People swarm through the L-shaped bazaar of Leh as they did a century or two earlier. A few of the shops are open, the merchants sitting on their haunches in small stalls weighing out walnuts or ginger, haggling over mule bells or turbans, measuring out three yards of cotton cloth.

But the ancient hum of the market is gone. Many of the stalls are closed. Their heavy wooden doors have been swung shut and fastened with padlocks. No longer are great caravans loaded with merchandise coming down from Yarkand in Sinkiang and Demchok in Tibet. In August 1951, there was some trade trickling over the Tibetan border. But it was slackening. There was none from Yarkand, for the Russians had closed the Sinkiang border. Yarkand merchants, who had picked their way over high passes to visit Leh, were now marooned. They could not return to

[1] [Barley beer--Analyst]

13: Heber and Heber D-3 (1914-25) 1926 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4

CHAPTER IV

Over the Zogi Pass

THE road between Leh and Srinagar, the summer capital of the Maharajah of Kashmir, and a popular hill station for the white man, is one of the chief highways to Central Asia, bearing its trade to and from India.

No wonder that one of the meanings attributed to the Zogi La, the dread pass that closes this road in winter, is the place of four meetings, for the roads from Tibet, Yarkand, Baltistan and Kashmir all converge here.

This road has been described by so many travellers, that it would be redundant to add another detailed account of the journey up to Leh. Suffice it to mention some of the outstanding features and incidents that have impressed themselves on one who has traversed it several times, and for whom most of its turns and corners bring to memory an additional reminiscence. The lower or Kashmir side of the pass includes the first stage to Ganderbal which is generally accomplished either by motor, for a car may go even another five to six miles to the Suspension Bridge which spans the Sindh, or by boat down the Mar Canal and across the Anchar Lake when there is enough water, otherwise taking an extra night and going down the river Jhelum to its meeting place or " wedding " with the Sindh river at Shadipur and then up to Ganderbal. Having once effected a junction with the Sindh, the marches from Ganderbal onwards lead directly up the Sindh river to the foot of the Zogi La. This valley is known to so many thou-

13: Heber and Heber D-3 (1914-25) 1926 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4

sands of summer tourists in the " Happy Valley " of Kashmir, and does not properly belong to our land at all, so we will leave it for others to describe. Its foaming river and beautiful forested hills, are perhaps seen at their best the latter half of May, when the fresh green of the early summer contrasts so vividly with the evergreen of pines and deodar. The snows then are low on the hills, and the glistening giant peaks peering over the forested edges of their humbler brethren are outlined against a blue sky flecked with soft white clouds, the air is still balmy, and the busy rushing torrent so often skirting the road not quite so thunderous as when the summer sun has brought the melted snows to swell it to a roaring river. This certainly is the most joyous time to travel upwards, though the wonderful autumn tints challenge any comparison with their own beauty, when the winter frost in the high sources of the river is already checking its flow, and the mad rush of melted snow gives place to a quiet flow of clear blue water. The summer heat is then over, but the chill in the air gives its presage of winter cold and bareness. So let us start in May, leave the early summer in Kashmir, already warm as an English mid-summer, and travel upwards towards the spring again, reaching Sonamerg, a favourite camping resort, the last week of that month, and wondering what awaits us on the Zogi, whither a mild winter and the news of an early opening have lured us, possibly, too soon. The crossing we now have in mind, perhaps the earliest in the year we have experienced, was accomplished together with Colonel Theodore and Mr. Kermit Roosevelt, sons of the famous President, who were travelling up with two other American gentlemen into Chinese Turkestan on a big game shooting and scientific expedition. With ourselves were two ladies, but this time no children, as one had gone home to school, and the other, together with her Tibetan nurse, had to be left temporarily with doctor friends in Kashmir, as her health would not stand a return to the altitude of Leh. Looking ahead we could see

13: Heber and Heber D-3 (1914-25) 1926 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4

the Sindh valley narrowing and just make out the snow-covered crest of a mountain which barred its upper end and indicated the site of the pass, about which we must say a few words.

The name Zogi La has another meaning attributed to it by the Tibetan, as well as the one just alleged, one which indicates the terrors that abound when winter holds it in its icy grip, namely the place of four demons. It is a pass of 11,500 feet, which separates Kashmir and what to many represents civilization, from the wild uplands of the Himalayas and the mysteries of the "distant morning lands" of Central Asia. Though its altitude is not very high for a pass, only equalling that of Leh, its difficulties are great. The summer road should be open from 15th May to 15th November, for on those dates the rates of transport alter from the high winter ones indicating coolie porterage only, to the lower summer ones of pony transport. In winter the difficulties are often insuperable owing to soft snow, blizzards and biting winds, and often the mails are delayed two or three weeks before the runners dare attempt the crossing, the telegraph wires themselves not infrequently breaking with the weight of snow. Traffic is at a standstill from mid-December to early March, save for adventurous travellers who, even then, it is stated, get themselves carried over in baskets on the backs of coolies, sturdy inhabitants of the villages bordering the Ladak side of the pass. In the centre of the Zogi La is a rest-house, often up to the eaves in snow, called Machoi, situated on the top of a small sharp hill, one side of which is sheltered from the prevailing winds, and has two or three small buildings, a serai and a telegraph office nestling under it. The telegraph master must have a dreary time in winter, and in the middle of May is moved to another post higher up on the road to Leh. The winter of 1924–5 was exceptionally mild and very little snow fell on the pass. April in Kashmir was a very hot month, more like June, and it was expected that the pass

13: Heber and Heber D-3 (1914-25) 1926 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4

neighbourhood of Leh can be seen. But there is a sudden descent from this plateau into the pretty and quaint little village of Basgo, which, with its peculiar rocks and ruins, *chorten* gates and *mani* walls, appeals to some people more than Lamayuru. In spring it is certainly a gem in the bare hills, for on the verge of the plain one suddenly comes upon it as a mass of apricot blossom. Above the Basgo-Nyemo valley neither the apricot nor the apple ripen properly, and the Leh supplies come mostly from there or from Saspola. The main road, which we must occasionally remind ourselves is the high road to Central Asia, leading through the village, passes many tumbledown *chortens* and *mani* walls, and, in one little recess on the left, one sees a fine example of a prayer-wheel made of a kerosene tin. On the outskirts, a row of prayer-wheels may be noted on a roof, waiting to be turned by the wind.

Over a sandy four-mile plain with a long *mani* wall extending half-way, we reach Nyemo, which looked only about twenty minutes ride from Bazgo, and are glad to enter the shade of its large *bagh*, and new bungalow. Here we remember camping once and taking our meal in the open by our tents, when a group of traders and their servants from the serai came to watch this interesting performance. Wearying of their unabashed stare, the Doctor Sahib at length rose, and addressed them in their own language. Pointing solemnly to the members indicated, he said, "I too am a man, I have eyes, ears, nose and mouth." A grin slowly spread over their faces as they caught the rebuke, and they stole away to bother us no more.

Now we have one more *rong* to ascend, then we soon come out on to a long terraced plain with a glorious view of our own Leh valley, the Indus spreading out into several silver streaks as it winds in and out of its broad acres. Grateful after the narrow gorges and long defiles is this open expanse, ringed by range after range of peaks pointing up to some 20,000 feet above sea level, whose snow can never melt. "My very own

13: Heber and Heber D-3 (1914-25) 1926 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4

hills" says our small Helen, returning to Leh from England at the age of five. "Not Daddy's nor Mummy's, but my very own Leh Mountains, I was borned there." The terraced plains are very long, but at length we pass Spitug with its monastery-crowned hill on our right, and turning a corner see Leh away up in the foothills to our left. Such a short journey it looks in this clear, rarefied air, but it is a good five miles uphill before we enter the "Sta-rgo," horse-gate, of the little town we have come so far to see. Once more we view with delight its broad bazar, headed by the mosque, its row of poplars on one side, its castle high on a hill to the right and behind it the mountains, over which the Kardong Pass leads to the Karakorums and distant Yarkand.

13: Heber and Heber D-3 (1914-25) 1926 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4

Usually perched on almost inaccessible crags, from its commanding elevation it can not only view the activities of the field-workers in the terraces below, but can discern the whole domestic life of roof and yard at its feet.

The road both enters and leaves the village through a *Chorten* gate. Suppose a child sets up two plain bricks with a third across the top, and on this placed a fat Chess pawn, he would have quite a good model of these *chorten*-crowned archways. But these are still more fascinating and picturesque in spring, when surrounded by apricot-trees in full blossom and seen against a background of azure sky and glittering peaks, for the snow then is still low on the mountains. Between entrance and exit, the road is usually just a rough path trodden out at the base of the hill, with the fields below and the houses above, varied here and there by a rough bridge of logs covered with stones and mud, and by an occasional water-course which must be jumped as it carries its clear ice-cold water along. The stables for ponies or cattle, who are brought into the bottoms of the houses by night, in winter at any rate, may be enclosures roughly walled in by stones, balanced on each other to a height of four to six feet. These rough walls are also built as boundaries to fields, where there is no natural delimitation, as by the edge of a terrace, or to enclose small orchards of apricot and apple-trees, or even to fence in a "bagh," that is, a small plantation of trees, whose wood is so precious, and whose luscious bark attracts the cattle. A slight push with the hand topples over enough wall to make a convenient gap, easily replaced, for entrance and exit, and, after the winter months, during which the donkeys and sheep, and especially the nimble goats, are allowed to wander at will picking up such bits of roots and fodder as they only know how to find, there are few walls that do not need rebuilding. Round the edges of the growing cornfields throughout the summer cows and goats may be seen feeding on the scant grass, always either tethered or led by a small

24:Peter E-5 (1938)1963 AJ4 West Tibetans AJ4
Ladak

Trade routes through Ladak are important, and there are three principal roads: that to Central Asia, to Sinkiang in China, over the Karakorum Pass (18,550 ft.) from Leh towards the north; that to Tibet along the upper course of the Indus (eventually going on beyond the divide with the waters of the Brahmaputra towards Shigatse and Lhasa in U-Tsang); and that to Srinagar, capital of Kashmir, to the west, which used to be called the Indo-British Treaty Road (really a prolongation and continuation of the Central Asian road). The road from Kulu which I had followed is only a secondary one, and that over Rupchu is not worth considering at all as an artery for trade.

Scenically, Ladak resembles Tibet more than it does Lahul. In Rupchu, which, strictly speaking, is a part of Ladak, although an isolated one, I already noticed that I was no longer in country like the valleys of Lahul. I was on high plateau, with mountain ranges around me which did not seem particularly high but which in reality, because of the altitude at which I already found myself and from which I observed them, were among the highest anywhere. With the Indus valley, although still at an altitude of over 10,000 feet, I reached a milder environment. Here, there were trees and grass growing along the banks of the river and its affluents. Villages were visible, high up, above the long stretches of rocks and shingle brought down by rivers in spate, where glacier water runs on the surface before going on underground to link up with the main watercourse in the valley. *Chötens*, *mani* walls and large *gompas* were everywhere to be seen, as befits a Buddhist, Tibetan lamaist country.

2. *Population*

The population of Ladak at the time of my visit was estimated at 32,999. It was divided up into the conventional distinctions between Buddhists (29,410),[1] Mohammedans (3,470), Hindus and Sikhs (49) and Christians (70). The proportion of men to women (important among a people practising polyandry) was given to me as 14,760 men to 14,650 women for the Buddhists, as 1,730 men to 1,740 women for the Moslems, 36 to 13 for the Hindus and Sikhs (who rarely bring their women with them to these distant parts) and 37 to 33 for the Christians (nearly all converts of the Moravian Mission). As can be seen, the bulk of the population is made up of the Buddhist Ladakis of Tibetan extraction. They nearly all belong to the *Drug-pa* sect, although there are also rep-

[1] The low-caste Mōns, Garas and Bhedas, all artisans, were apparently included among the Buddhists, although their religion appears more akin to animism.

1: Drew G-3 (1862-1872) 1875 AV1 Kashmir
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moisture-bearing air and even cloud-carrying wind to come through; here occur a greater number of slight showers during the summer than in the other valleys of Ladākh; but the difference is slight as compared with the great difference between the two sides of the Pass, and is most chiefly shown in winter, when the snow lies thicker in Drās than it does farther to the east.

The passage from Bāltal to Drās, a distance of 30 miles, generally done in two long days, is, in the summer, from June onwards, a not difficult road as things go in this country; it can be passed without difficulty by horses; nor does the first fall of snow (which may happen in the end of October or in November) commonly shut the road for them; but later on, usually by some time in December, the snow has become so thick that for horses to attempt the passage is rash, and only men so hardy and persevering as some of the tribes who live about Drās, or else those who get their aid, as I have done—aid that well deserves acknowledgment and thankfulness—can hope to get over in safety. Thus—although in the winter the Drās people, by watching their opportunity and waiting for some days when necessary, will keep up communication between Kashmir and Ladākh, and even carry merchandise over on their backs—the road is not thoroughly open again, ponies cannot attempt it, till the end of May.

The first village that we come to on the eastern side of the Pass, the highest in the valley, is Matāyan, which is 16 miles short of Drās; the next is Pān Drās,* five or six miles farther on; in the more open valley of Drās itself we find numerous hamlets scattered about.

Here, as in all the countries on this side of the main range, there is nothing grown without irrigation; at Drās, barley, and the variety of it called grim, are the grains mostly cultivated, for these can ripen in the time that the short summer allows. The villages

* Without attempting myself to give a derivation of the word "Pān" in the name of this village, I must protest against the connecting of it with the Persian word *Pāīn*, lower. It will be enough if I point out that Pān Drās is higher up the valley and at a higher absolute level than Drās.

1: Drew G-S (1862-1872) 1875 AVI Kashmir
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491 plan of crossing the stream three times, by wooden bridges, we
133* pass the difficulties and find our way to the valley of the Indus itself, and, after another mile or two and after crossing the river, to the village and halting-place of Khalsi.

KHALSI TO LEH: FOUR MARCHES.

491 The Indus is spanned by a wooden bridge where rocks narrow
712 it up to a width of 60 or 70 feet only. The bridge is com-
361 manded by a small fort on the higher bank; the path from the
241 bridge, indeed, is led along the covered way half round the fort. The village of Khalsi is on a plateau about 250 feet above the river; there is here a long strip of cultivated land watered from a side-stream; crops and fruit-trees grow on it well, and even luxuriantly; walnuts and apricots ripen, though the height above the sea is something over 10,000 feet.

133* From this place upwards, to near Leh, the Indus Valley has one character. The river flows either between rocks or against alluvial cliffs, according to whether the mountain spurs reach the water or strips of alluvium-terrace intervene. The hills that are [361] seen are not very lofty; all are bare and extremely dry. The [241] only green visible is on those spots where the streams from the mountains on the north-east are brought on to the alluvial plateaus and enable the ground to be tilled; there villages have been formed, and we see the verdure of corn-fields and of orchards, or rather of the lines of fruit-trees that have been planted along the watercourses that skirt the little fields.

• 487 For the next three days' journey there are two routes that may be taken; they unite again one march short of Leh. The first is along the valley, keeping as near to the river as the ground will allow; the other is a higher route along a series of plateaus behind the former; it is this latter that we choose; the valley itself will be again spoken of in a later chapter.

133* After continuing for a few miles in the immediate Indus Valley,
361 we turn up a ravine to the left, and, rising some 1500 feet, we get on to a high plain between an outer, low, range of hills and the

1: Drew G-3 (1862-1872) 1875 AV1 Kashmir
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The next day a few miles of sloping plain, similar to what we had crossed so much of, brought us to Bāzgo.

It must be understood that in these marches from Khalsī we were all along edging the lofty granite range that for such a long distance divides the valley of the Indus from that of its great tributary the Shāyok. For the greater part of the way spurs of it only were visible—rugged and bare, brown and yellow, hills, whose surface was much-disjointed rock; but sometimes the eye reached up the valleys to the lofty central ridge, still of the same character, or else, perhaps, touched with the white of some recent snowfall.

Bāzgo is a large village; as one looks down on it from the edge of the plateau it has a picturesque and strange look on account of the position of some of its buildings, as of the monastery, on the towering rock.

The two routes that had separated near Khalsī have again met here at Bāzgo. From that place the one road traverses a stony plain not very much above the level of the Indus. Nimū is passed, a large village at the inner edge of this plain. Again there intervenes a low line of hills between the Indus and the great range; but here there is no road at all by the river side, so steep is the cliff; we have therefore once more to leave the near neighbourhood of the river and go over more stony plateaus between the outer, low, line of hill and the high mountains. A rise of about 1200 feet up a narrow ravine, cut in the alluvial deposits, brought us to the plateau level, and we then found ourselves in the same desolate kind of country we had passed through before coming to Bāzgo. There was the stony plain, made up of granite detritus, and bounded by rocky mountains; on neither, for miles, was anything green visible; the near mountains—spurs jagged by weathering—were of many shades and tints of brown, the variations occurring sometimes in veins, sometimes in masses, and sometimes being due to a talus of blocks fallen from one particular coloured cliff; in the higher parts the hills were more of one sober brown colour, and of more regular lines of ridge.

Up one of the stony ravines is the village of Umla; but

1: Drew G-3 (1862-1872) 1875 AV1 Kashmir
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Valley. At the mouth of it the Hanū stream comes out of a narrow, deep, impassable gorge; one turns this by rising over the shoulder of one of the mountains whose spurs compose its walls; passing up the valley, still between bare mountains, we come to a strip of cultivated ground; then we come to another narrow rocky part, and then again to where a strip of cultivation occupies the bottom of the valley; this space between the mountains becomes wider, and the level is occupied by the village of Yogma Hanū or Lower Hanū. On the way, fruit-trees and willows and a few poplars had been passed, but at the higher level now reached hardly any trees were growing. Goma Hanū, or Upper Hanū, lies a few miles above; beyond that the road leads to a Pass over the Indus and Shāyok watershed to the tract called Chorbat. It will be seen from the Political Map that this is the way of the route from Skārdū to Ladākh, the difficulty of the valley-road, in the parts we have lately come from, thus deflecting the traffic to go over a Pass of 16,700 feet. The Chorbat Pass is the boundary of Baltistān in this direction; by this road also used to come Baltī raiders, as the remains of a fort at Yogma Hanū prove, which the people of the valley had put up against them.

But we must return to the Indus Valley. One or two incidents of physical geography respecting this part of it may here be described. The lowest part, the bottom, of the valley has been spoken of as a narrow gorge. The gorge, not all along, but in places, is 600 feet deep; that is to say that the bottom part of the section of the Indus Valley is, for that height, specially narrow and steep; it seems as if, in the gradual cutting of the valley, this deepest part had been worked down under somewhat different conditions from the rest. I connect with this the narrowness of many of the side ravines where they join the main valley; the same causal difference (as, it may be, in the rate of downward denudation) affected the side valleys as well as the main valley. Thus the valley of the stream that comes down from Tsirmo, at the last, before reaching the Indus, closes to a narrow chasm with vertical walls of granite; this is quite impassable by man. We saw also

* [Cf category IIc, End Map VI -- Analyst]

1: Drew G-3 (1862-1872) 1875 AV1 Kashmir
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streams. In one of these tributary valleys is situated Himis monastery, the most noted one in Ladākh, which has 200 Lāmās. The monastery is a large mass of buildings placed just beneath a cliff at a bend of the narrow ravine, and in that way well sheltered. The wide window spaces and open galleries, and the decorations of drapery and waving flags make it look quite gay. Close by is a grove of large spreading poplars, which must be of the oldest trees in the country.

The last point I have been to in this section of the Indus Valley is Upshī, a small village at the mouth of the Gyā ravine. At that place we will count Central Ladākh to end. Above it is a narrow portion of the valley, which is called *Rong*, where the river flows between rocks, along which it is difficult to find a practicable path; still, there also villages occur in the side valleys, and a small population finds cultivable just enough of land to get a subsistence from.

ROAD FROM LEH TO NUBRĀ.

In going from Central Ladākh to Nubrā (which lies along the banks of the Shāyok River and of a tributary to it) we must of necessity cross the Leh Range by one of two or three Passes. From Leh a direct road leads up along the stream whose waters irrigate the lands about that town. The Pass to make for is the Khardong Pass, which is 17,500 feet high; there is, therefore, an ascent to be made of 6000 feet. Not easily can this be done in one day; a half-way halt is almost always made, either at the last hamlet or farther up in the uninhabited part of the valley. The path is in places difficult for laden ponies; they are generally relieved of their loads and are replaced for the Pass by yāks. The way leads for some miles up the bottom of the valley, rising at an angle of 5°; then it continues in a branch valley of steeper gradient, till it reaches the watershed, which at this spot is a narrow rocky ridge.

A better idea of the form of the mountain range we are now going over than can be given in words will be got from the

1: Drew G-3 (1862-1872) 1875 AV1 Kashmir
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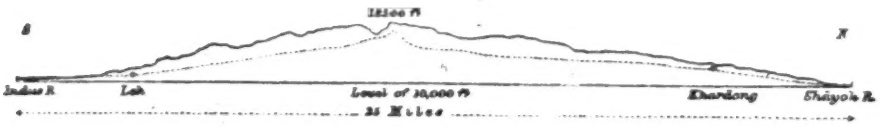
482 133* annexed section of it, made through a spot a little to the west of the road. The broken line represents where the path itself goes.

On the north of the Pass the road crosses a bed of ice which lies on the slope, and leads down a steep descent of some 1600 feet, to a small lake enclosed by a stony barrier which looked



SECTION THROUGH THE LEH RANGE, ON A TRUE SCALE.

as if it might have been formed by avalanches. Thence an easy but long descent leads us for many miles down a valley between spurs from the main ridge. Several more little lakes are passed at different levels, which all seem to have been caused by either fans or avalanches damming the waters; there are, too, old moraine-mounds spread over a large space of ground. As we still descend we come to some grazing-grounds in the valley-bottom; then to some outlying hamlets, and then to a large village which is named Khardong. This place is on the remaining part of an alluvial plateau that has been much denuded. It is bounded in one direction by cliffs several hundred feet high, composed of alluvial matter. The onward path leads down to the stream at the foot of these cliffs, and continues along the bottom, where — rare sight for Ladākh — is a strip of brushwood jungle. From this narrow passage we debouch into the larger valley of the Shāyok River. Crossing that river by a ford (if the season be favourable) we then keep along its right bank for the length of a day's march, till we reach the centre of the district of Nubrā.

NUBRĀ.

133* This district consists of the valley of the Nubrā River—which flows from the north-north-west—and of a portion of the valley of the Shāyok River, with which it unites. There are the wide

1: Drew G-3 (1862-1872) 1875 AV1 Kashmir
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to the rest of Ladākh both by physical characters and by the close relationship in race, speech, religion, and character that exists between the people of the two countries. Till forty years ago, Zānskār was equally connected with Central Ladākh by political ties, being governed by a Raja, who was dependent on the Gyalpo at Leh; but now it belongs (as can be seen from the Political Map) not to the Ladākh Governorship, but to the district of Udampūr, in the Outer Hills, having been attached to this for, so to say, accidental reasons.

From all sides the approach to Zānskār, placed, as it is, in a maze of mountains, is of considerable difficulty. To the south-west of it the wide Snowy Range makes a barrier, to cross which must be a laborious and may be a dangerous business. From the north-west and the south-east, indeed, roads lead in from Surū and from Rupshu respectively, to traverse which is less difficult, but these lead over long uninhabited tracts. That way which first one would look to for communication with Leh — by the valley of the Zānskār River—is quite impassable, except when the winter's frost makes a road over the waters of the river. Instead of this, in summer time, the traveller from Leh has to make a long detour by Lāmāyūrū; he has to traverse fifteen stages, in which several Passes have to be surmounted, before Zānskār is reached.

By far the greater part of the area of Zānskār is occupied by the ridges and the ravines of mountains, either of the Snowy Watershed Range, or of the more complicated mass lying between that and Central Ladākh. The inhabited region is nearly all included in the valleys of two streams and of the river they make by their union. These two streams come, one from the north-west, the other from south-east; uniting, they together flow away to the north-east. At their junction is a wide open space, which is the central part of Zānskār; it includes in itself the most important places. This space is a triangle, with a base of seven miles, and a perpendicular of five; on the three sides it is bounded by bare mountains. But a very small proportion of this plain is cultivated; the most of it is an expanse of stony ground; the

1: Drew G-3 (1862-1872) 1875 AV1 Kashmir
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But to reach those parts we have to cross the Toglung Pass, of 17,500 feet elevation, which we approach by continuing up the same valley for some 14 miles more; it gradually increases in slope, but even at the end is not steep; a smooth neck of ground makes the Pass, and the hills near are themselves rounded. From the summit we obtain a view which gives us some insight into Rupshu. There is a pretty steep slope beneath us of near 1500 feet, and then a flat valley extending long to the south-east and widening, thus showing us far off, 18 miles distant, the blue waters of one of the lakes which we shall visit—the Salt Lake. The flat bottom of the valley is bounded by smooth naked hills. It is such valleys as this, varying from a mile to (rarely) six miles in width, and enclosed by mountains rising sometimes 2000 feet and sometimes as much as 5000 feet above them, that make what are called the uplands, or sometimes the table-lands, of Rupshu.

Before detailing the many interesting phenomena in physical geography which are presented to us in the various portions of this district, we will look at those circumstances which affect the peopling of it; which cause it in a certain degree to be fit as a dwelling-place for man, yet limit narrowly the number of people it can support.

RUPSHU AS INHABITED.

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With an elevation of 14,000 and 15,000 feet for the valleys, the climate is necessarily extremely severe in point of temperature; it is at the same time of an extreme dryness. The character of the summer climate of Rupshu is warmth of sun and constant coolness of the air. At midday the sun's rays are exceedingly powerful; on the decline one experiences cold, which is intensified by the biting wind that commonly springs up in the afternoon. At night, even in the height of summer, except when the sky may be overcast, water freezes; in the beginning of August I have seen ice caking the pools. The snow limit is about 20,000 feet; this great height of it is due to the dryness of the air, to the small amount of snowfall of each year, an amount so small that below that level it all becomes melted during summer. Mountains that

1: Drew G-3 (1862-1872) 1875 AV1 Kashmir
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tion of the origin of this lake, but I have turned over in my mind two or three hypotheses. The alluvium might at one time have filled the basin, which doubtless was originally but part of a valley tributary to that down which flows the stream; then, during some part of the glacial period, a glacier from the north-east may have scooped the hollow out of the gneiss and of the alluvium; thus the hollow would be a rock basin, counting the alluvium as part of the rock. Another theory is that at the time this tributary valley opened out to the larger one it was occupied by a glacier, and then the alluvium of the larger valley was deposited *against that glacier;* then, later, the ice disappearing left the hollow. The difficulty in the way of this is to know why no outlet was kept open by the water that must have flowed from the glacier. Altogether this little lake is about the most puzzling one I have met with.

INDUS VALLEY.

East of Tsomorīrī there is a part of Rupshu which I have never visited—the valley of Hanle. It seems from the accounts to be another of these flat, high-level, alluvium-filled valleys, bounded by mountains which soon rise up to a height of 4000 or 5000 feet or more above it. At Hanle, which is 14,276 feet high, is a monastery built on a rocky spur some hundred feet above the plain. Passing by this tract, of which I have no personal knowledge, let us go to the Indus Valley, which, in the highest part of it included in the Maharaja's dominions, forms a portion of Rupshu, and is periodically visited by the Rupshu tribe with their flocks.

From the south-east corner of the Salt Lake plain there leads a valley, which, followed up, brings one to an easy Pass, by name Folokonka, about 16,500 feet high, and beyond that one comes into the valley of Pūga, a place where borax and sulphur are dug. The road from Tsomorīrī, by the little lake Tso Kyāghar, also leads over a saddle of rock down into the Pūga Valley, which, farther followed down, brings us in a few miles to the Indus River. The former of these two paths is the way taken by the Rupshu Chāmpās in the course of their migrations. The portion

2: Gervis T-3 (no date) 1954 AV1 Kashmir
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under eight thousand feet high, while most of the people live at an elevation of between twelve thousand and fifteen thousand feet, no wonder that few venture from their country, and when they do, have soon to return or die in the denser air of the lower countries. During the days of the summer months it is exhaustingly hot, in winter, freezing cold; the summer nights can also be bitter.

Routes are divided up into so many "marches"; in the old days a march was considered the distance which could be reasonably covered in a day, providing at the end a good camping ground for the night, and usually places where fresh coolies could be employed.

The route from Srinagar to Leh which goes by way of Sonamarg, Dras and Kargil is broken up into sixteen marches, the first portion to Sonamarg being divided up into four, whereas in these days it can easily be done in a day, and providing the weather is good, this also applies to some extent to a few of the other marches laid down for other parts of the journey which is a distance over all of two hundred and forty-two miles. Since it is one of the main trade routes into Kashmir it is not astonishing that the road, when passable, is good; by that I mean good the whole of the way for horses and pack mules, and with a surprising number of quite reasonable rest houses on the way.

The first pass to be traversed after leaving Sonamarg is eleven thousand, three hundred feet high and between Beltal and Matayan. It is usually open for horses from June to December, though we soon discovered that we had been well advised to employ Dras ponymen for that part of the journey; they know the route and the short cuts as well as the diversions to save hard climbing, in addition to being able to forecast accurately the weather in the mountains.

This pass is considered to be very dangerous with sudden storms and avalanches descending upon in it the early part of the year, so that the advice always given is that there must be at least two fine crisp days after such a happening before one attempts a crossing. On the occasion when we went over, our men had refused to move for two days and then insisted on starting from Baltal, the last stage, in the early hours of the

2: Gervis T-3 (no date) 1954 AV1 Kashmir
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487 morning so that we reached the summit with the dawn. There
133 the wind was bitterly cold; we followed the lower track, for the road along the face of the cliff was impossible.

The Tibetan name for the pass is Zoji La; this was the first time that we discovered that most of the places from there on had two names, a Kashmiri one and a Tibetan one. Unfortunately the map seemed to have mixed them up, probably using the best known, but we did not always strike men of the country who recognised them.

[485] Once over the pass the country changes completely; there is already a Tibetan atmosphere in the air. Going down the other side there are numerous little dak huts built by the roadside for the use of those who chance the journey too late and get caught by the weather.

361 We came upon what we at first imagined would be the start of
136 a village, but found it to consist of a house or two, a telegraph post and a rest house. At many places tracks led off, some to lone, distant "farms", some to parts which were known to be good for shikar, for game is plentiful for the sportsman in parts of Ladakh. It is the home of the ibex and the markhor; both are of the wild goat family; there are wild sheep and kiang—sandy red, wild asses with dark manes and standing about twelve hands high—which are impossible to break; then there are red bear, snow leopard and in parts wolves are to be found; antelope and gazelle are common as are the reddish-brown marmot.

491 Here and there places had been marked on the Srinagar-printed map as the spot where a bridge would be found over the river, but there was no sign of it, probably the floods of the last season had carried it away, and we had to ford the waters; then on closer examination of the map we noticed a mark at the spot we had selected and decided that the printer had forgotten to make up his letterpress to include it in the key, or perhaps we were credited with enough common sense to know.

485 The first night we reached a rest house, and were there only just in time, for a quarter of an hour later a large party of men from Leh arrived; a few remained to sleep under the verandahs
515 outside—the stench of bodies was overpowering. I have been assured that the men of Ladakh are bathed three times only in their lives, when they are born, when they marry and when they

2: Gervis T-3 (no date) 1954 AV1 Kashmir AV1
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788 the lamas and those going to the chapels sending still more as they climb the steps and give a twist to the dozens of prayer wheels on either side.

● 467 Then for some miles the road is trying, at times through a narrowing gorge, up and down the rock sides. Few others than those who knew the road well would have dared to have ridden, for there is nothing to save one from slipping over the side, and in places the track had almost broken away to leave nothing. I think the most terrifying experience is when a small portion of the track gives way under one's feet: yet the horses know the road; at times, as you walk ahead, there is a pull at the rein, and turning you see your horse testing with his forefoot the ground immediately ahead of him.

361 Then the road changes to open country. It is hard going, being shadeless, so that during the middle of the day the journey was difficult with the heat seeming to come up from the ground, forcing us to halt during these hours at a wayside rest house, to continue later, passing but one patch of vegetation in about fifteen miles of monotonous track to Saspul where there is a most fascinating Alchi monastery containing many traces of Kashmir workmanship. There is also the cave monastery of Nyiziapur, now a ruin.

The next day we covered the eleven mile march from Saspul to Nimu, starting rather late since we had that morning visited the monastery. At the beginning the journey was interesting, the more so after the bare country we had gone over for the past few days. We left the river Indus and crossed a plateau, then down into the most picturesque village of Bazgu. The high cliffs are peppered with old ruins, the village itself built on a steep hill, the rocks fantastic in their shape and brilliant in colour, with the whole dominated by a large Lamasery and a ruined castle which history says "were long besieged by Mongols in the time of Gyalpo Delegs who ruled between 1640 and 1680 A.D." The rest of the day was spent over arid sandy wastes, a distance of some four miles to reach the comfort of a rest house with a garden.

The last march of all is nearly eighteen miles, first ascending the plateau, then as the valley opens out, a gradual descent through a stony desert, at odd places relieved by small patches of

2: Gervis T-3 (no date) 1954 AV1 Kashmir
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green cultivation. Then the welcome halting place—a rest house for lunch, a famous monastery some hundred years old, a ruined castle as usual, and a further three miles on to a most picturesque monastery which is five hundred years old, and the entrance to the Leh valley. Here we left the river Indus, to make the gradual ascent over the now better road to Leh, which we could see some four miles in the distance, and which I must admit did not thrill me as we made towards it; we had passed on the way so many beautiful places that I expected to discover in Leh the jewel of them all. As we neared it we could make out on the hill the great, one hundred roomed palace of the ancient kings of Ladakh, and above that the enormous—in their spread—buildings of the monastery, and were duly impressed, though not overawed, for everything seems to be of the same earth stone colour, as though the buildings, which could be made in miniature with a child's box of bricks, have risen from the rocks like the commencement of an eruption which changed its mind, just as we had seen so many of them on our way, now decaying back to from whence they came.

But Leh is an important place, not only is it the capital of Ladakh, but it is also—and to the people of the country this is far more important—the religious capital of Western Tibet, besides being a great centre for caravans passing to and from Central Asia, the entrepôt of trade between India on the south, and Yarkand, Khotan and Tibet on the north and east. Here in the great bazaar which is held in the September month of each year. Traders from Turkistan, Siberia, Tibet and other parts of Central Asia come to buy, sell and barter their merchandise with those who have come from Kashmir and India, so that we found people of all races and religions there with Buddhism predominating, and a sprinkling of Mohammedans; a Moravian Mission is there also, and among the people are to be found numbers of Mohammedan half-castes known as Arghons; they are the offsprings of visiting traders and the women of the land "with whom they have made a temporary marriage".

The Ladakhis are Mongolian in features. Their ugly faces are soon forgotten though, since they possess a pronounced sense of humour and are always laughing, although their dirty stubby teeth then seen are not an enhancement to their beauty. Very